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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 14 February 1992, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. SOLT (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE (agenda item 4) (continued) (E/CN.4/1992/L.2, L.3 and L.5)

Draft resolution on human rights in the occupied Syrian Golan (E/CN.4/1992/L.2)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the observers for Afghanistan and Angola had become sponsors of the draft resolution.

2. Mr. BLACKWELL (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that it was regrettable that unbalanced, inflammatory and unhelpful draft resolutions should be submitted to the Commission at a time when the peace process in the Middle East was under way. They should not, however, be allowed to hinder that process, which was inevitably fraught with difficulty. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

3. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, the vote was taken by roll call.

4. Mauritania, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay.

5. Draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.2 was adopted by 31 votes to 1, with 17 abstentions.

Draft resolution on the question of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine (E/CN.4/1992/L.3)

6. The CHAIRMAN said that the delegations of Cyprus, Gabon, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Sri Lanka and the observer for Morocco had become sponsors of the draft resolution. At the request of the delegations of Cuba and the United States, separate roll-call votes would be taken on parts A and B of the draft resolution.

7. Mr. GROS ESPIELL (Uruguay), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that, while his delegation shared many of the concerns expressed in the draft resolution, the text did not seem appropriate in view of the peace initiatives currently in progress. His delegation could not, therefore, vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Part A

8. The Russian Federation, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Angola, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining: Argentina, Austria, Bulgaria, Chile.

9. Part A of draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3 was adopted by 30 votes to 15, with 4 abstentions.

Part B

10. Venezuela, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay.

11. Part B of draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3 was adopted by 31 votes to 1, with 17 abstentions.

12. The CHAIRMAN said that the delegation of Gabon, one of the sponsors of draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3, had unfortunately been unable to be present for the voting.

13. Mr. SANTA-CLARA (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community that were members of the Commission in explanation of their votes on draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3, parts A and B, said that the Community had been unable to support those draft resolutions because their spirit and the use of intemperate language were not helpful in creating the stable environment required for progress in the current peace negotiations. Furthermore, the absence of any reference to the peace process initiated at Madrid constituted a serious imbalance, since human rights questions could not be dissociated from the overall political situation in the region. The resolutions were not consistent with the peace process, the outcome of which they sought to prejudge.

14. In 1990, resolutions on the same subject had been adopted by the Commission with the support of the voting members of the European Community. In 1991, however, the authors of the draft resolutions had regrettably reverted to inadequate, outdated and non-constructive language. Draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3, parts A and B, in particular, contained new elements which had further impeded attempts to reach a common understanding on the texts.

15. The European Community continued to take exception to the use of such expressions as "perpetration of crimes of torture", "concentration camps", and "practices of annexation". In addition, it could not accept references to Palestinian "citizens" in the texts, since it did not recognize Palestinian statehood. It also had doubts concerning the reference, in that context, to article 90 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

16. The votes of the States members of the European Community did not imply any disagreement with the concerns expressed in the resolutions in question but solely their unhappiness with the language used. They remained deeply concerned about the human rights situation in all the occupied territories.

17. The Community, nevertheless, welcomed the dialogue which had been initiated with the authors of the draft resolutions and regretted that it had not addressed the Community's particular concerns. However, the States of the Community remained ready to continue the dialogue in a constructive and open manner.

18. Ms. PARK (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that her delegation had voted against draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3, part A, because of the latter's reference to "legitimate resistance against the Israeli military occupation" in operative paragraph 2. Such language could be a provocation to further violence. Her delegation deplored all the violence taking place in the Israeli occupied territories, whatever the source, and believed that more moderate language in resolutions would better serve the cause of peace and reconciliation.

19. Her delegation had abstained on the vote on draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3, part B, because its unbalanced language was unhelpful to the current peace process.

20. Mrs. SILVA Y SILVA (Peru) said that her delegation had voted in favour of draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3. However, in view of the fact that peace negotiations were in progress, it would have preferred more balanced language in some passages of their texts.

21. Mr. ITO (Japan) said that his delegation had abstained on the vote on draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3, part B, and had voted against draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.3, part A, since it did not support some of the language used in the texts.

22. Mr. de BRITO CRUZ (Brazil) said that his delegation had voted in favour of all the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 4, since the human rights situation in the occupied Arab territories continued to require monitoring and action on the part of the Commission. His delegation would, nevertheless, have preferred a more balanced wording in certain passages.

23. Mr. MALGUINOV (Russian Federation) said that, while his delegation deplored the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, it had been unable to vote in favour of the draft resolutions since they did not reflect the realities and processes currently under way. His delegation could not accept any expressions which might be construed as support for violence or an attempt to undermine the current peace process.

24. Mr. PASHOVSKY (Bulgaria) said that his delegation, while sharing the concerns over the violation of human rights expressed in the draft resolutions, had voted against draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3, part A, because their language was inappropriate and because they failed to take account of the peace process initiated at Madrid. It was the responsibility of the Commission to promote a favourable climate for that process.

25. Mrs. RUESTA de FURTER (Venezuela) said that, while her delegation had voted in favour of draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3, it would have preferred the language used in some passages to be more balanced.

26. Mr. RAMLAWI (Observer for Palestine) said he was astonished at the negative attitude displayed by many delegations towards draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2 and E/CN.4/1992/L.3, an attitude that was based on illogical and unrealistic grounds and was not in accordance with the general position of the international community.

27. The fact that peace negotiations were in progress did not mean that the occupation of the Arab territories, including Palestine, had ended or that the human rights of the Arab population of those territories were no longer being violated and international law no longer being flouted. The issue of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories still remained.

28. During the first phase of the peace process at Madrid, the Israeli Government had announced that new settlements were being established in the occupied territories. While negotiations were under way in Washington, it had announced that 12 Palestinians were being expelled from their homeland. Meanwhile the daily killings of Palestinians in the occupied territories continued and settlers were allowed to expropriate the homes of Palestinians with the connivance of the occupying authority.

29. The international community could not remain silent in the face of that situation simply because a peace process had been initiated. That had not been the position of the Security Council, which had condemned Israeli violations of the human rights of the population in the occupied territories long after the peace process had begun. Prior to that, the General Assembly had also adopted a number of resolutions condemning Israel for its practices. To be silent in the face of ongoing human rights abuses was wrong, and only encouraged the Israeli authorities to persist in their actions.

30. Certain delegations had said that they could not accept the term "Palestinian citizens" in the text of the draft resolution. Such a position ignored the historical and legal fact that the Palestinian people had lived in those lands long before the creation of a country called Israel.

31. As for those who objected to the mention of torture in the draft resolution, he would refer them to resolutions of the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies, which dealt with the subject of torture in the occupied Arab territories. In addition, the reports of Amnesty International, year after year, contained details of cases of Palestinians being tortured to death by the occupying Power.

Draft resolution on Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories (E/CN.4/1992/L.5)

32. Mr. SANTA-CLARA (Portugal), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by the delegations of Albania, India and Jordan, said that the main thrust of the draft resolution was to reaffirm the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, and the illegality of the installation of Israeli civilians in the occupied territories.

33. While following closely the text of Commission resolution 1991/3, the draft included two new preambular paragraphs, which took account of the need to create the stable environment required for progress in the current negotiation process and expressed the conviction that the halting by Israel of its policy of settlement would constitute a meaningful contribution to the creation of such an environment. The last two operative paragraphs regretted that the Government of Israel had not complied with the provisions of Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1990/1 and 1991/3 and urged it to abstain from installing settlers, including immigrants, in the occupied territories. It was the sponsors' hope that the draft resolution could be adopted by consensus.

34. At the request of the representative of the United States of America, a vote was taken by show of hands on draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.5.

35. Draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.5 was adopted by 45 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS APPLICATION TO PEOPLES UNDER COLONIAL OR ALIEN DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION (agenda item 9) (continued) (E/CN.4/1992/L.4)

Draft resolution on the situation in occupied Palestine (E/CN.4/1992/L.4)

36. Mr. RADAODY-RAKOTONDRAVAO (Madagascar), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by the delegations of Bangladesh and Gabon and the observers for Albania and Morocco, noted that in order to reflect the latest developments in the situation in Palestine and on the international scene, the text had enlarged upon Commission on Human Rights resolution 1991/6 by the addition of a number of new paragraphs, including the thirteenth preambular paragraph, which affirmed that the directing of the immigration of Jews in an organized manner to Israel constituted support for Israel's settlement policy in the occupied Palestinian territories and an obstacle to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination. Operative paragraph 6, which was also new, expressed the Commission's great interest in the current process of negotiations, which had begun in Madrid, between the parties to the conflict to resolve the problem of Palestine and of the Middle East.

37. At the request of the representatives of Madagascar and the United States of America, the vote was taken by roll-call.

38. The United States of America, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Angola, Bangladesh, Barbados, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Gabon, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Against: United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

39. Draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4 was adopted by 31 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.

40. During the vote on the draft resolution, Mr. KESSEL (Canada) asked for the floor on a point of order to request that the voting on the draft resolution as a whole be halted and that a separate vote be held first on preambular paragraph 13, in keeping with his delegation's request to the secretariat, which it had made before the vote had begun.

41. After a procedural discussion, in which Mr. MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. OMAR (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. RADAODY-RAKOTONDRAVAO (Madagascar), Mr. KESSEL (Canada), Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan), Mr. BLACKWELL (United States of America), Mr. STROHAL (Austria) and Mr. RAO KOURI (Cuba) took part, the CHAIRMAN said that, as the delegation of Canada had already cast its vote on draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4 as a whole, there was no justification for halting the vote, which would therefore continue. Delegations that so desired could, when giving explanations of vote, indicate how they would have voted on preambular paragraph 13 of the draft resolution, had it been put to a separate vote, and whether the outcome of such a separate vote would have affected their votes on the draft resolution as a whole.

42. Mr. SANTA CLARA (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community that were members of the Commission, said that the statement he had made a few minutes earlier concerning the resolutions on agenda item 4 applied equally to draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4.

43. Mr. BARKER (Australia) said that if a separate vote had been taken on the thirteenth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, his delegation would have voted against it.

44. Mr. STROHAL (Austria) said that his Government's position on the question of Palestine was well known and had been expressed repeatedly in all competent international forums, such as the General Assembly. Austria acknowledged the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination.

45. In its statement on item 4, his delegation had expressed the hope that the process begun in Madrid would pave the way for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. It therefore welcomed the fact that those views had been reflected in draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4. On the other hand, it regretted that the wording in some other passages of the draft resolution did not seem to be conducive to that peace process and it had therefore been unable to vote in favour of the text.

46. His delegation also regretted that it had not been possible to hold the separate vote requested in respect of the thirteenth preambular paragraph. His delegation would have voted against it.

47. Mr. MALGUINOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation's previous remarks concerning the resolutions on agenda item 4 remained valid. With regard to draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4, his delegation was unable to support the provision in the thirteenth preambular paragraph, which might be interpreted as a restriction on the inalienable right of everyone to leave any country, including his own. If that paragraph had been put to a separate vote, his delegation would have voted against it.

48. Mr. KALOC (Czech and Slovak Federal Republic) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution as a whole. However, if a separate vote had been taken on the thirteenth preambular paragraph, his delegation would have voted against it.

49. Ms. PARK (Canada) said that her delegation, which had abstained on the vote on draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4, considered that the thirteenth preambular paragraph directly questioned the right of Jews to emigrate to Israel, a concept that was unacceptable. It was for that reason that it had requested a separate vote on that paragraph. If such a vote had been held, it would have voted against the paragraph.

50. The references to the self-determination of the Palestinian people in various preambular paragraphs were to be interpreted as meaning that the right must be exercised in the context of peaceful negotiations, such as the current peace process.

51. The new operative paragraph 6, which noted the peace negotiations begun at Madrid, was helpful in giving full recognition to that important process which must advance through negotiations among the parties.

52. Mr. NASSERI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution and would have become one of its sponsors were it not for certain of its provisions, particularly operative paragraph 6.

53. Mr. CHABALA (Zambia) said that his delegation had been absent when the Commission had voted on draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4. It had also been absent during the voting on draft resolutions E/CN.4/1992/L.2, L.3 and L.5. His delegation's position on all those draft resolutions was well known, its support for the demands of the people in the occupied territories being irrevocable. It had traditionally sponsored the resolutions on agenda items 4 and 9 and and had intended to do so again. Unfortunately, however, it had received its instructions too late.

54. Mr. PIRIZ BALLON (Uruguay) said that, although his delegation shared a number of the concerns underlying draft resolution E/CN.4/1992/L.4, it had voted against the text because it considered the language to be inappropriate. However, if the thirteenth preambular paragraph had been deleted, following a separate vote, his delegation would have abstained on the text as a whole.

55. Mr. MENDEZ GRATEROL (Venezuela) said that, although his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution, it would have preferred more balanced language.

56. Mr. de BRITO CRUZ (Brazil) said that his delegation had voted for the draft resolution.

57. Since the separate vote requested on the thirteenth preambular paragraph had not been held because of a technical misunderstanding, his delegation wished to state that, if a vote had been held on that paragraph, it would have been unable to support it.

REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND PROTECTION OF MINORITIES ON ITS FORTY-THIRD SESSION (agenda item 17) (continued) (E/CN.4/1992/2 and 45-47; E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/5; E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/SR.14; A/46/543)

58. Mr. STROHAL (Austria) said that the forty-third session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had been a very constructive one. The Sub-Commission had taken a number of important initiatives, such as the decision to begin a study on the question of impunity and the decision to prepare a sort of feasibility study concerning the right to adequate housing.

59. With regard to the Sub-Commission's ongoing activities, much discussion had focused on Mr. Türk's second progress report on economic, social and cultural rights (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/17), and particularly on the question of appropriate indicators and the impact of structural readjustments on those rights.

60. As in previous years, the Sub-Commission had accomplished a considerable amount of standard-setting work on the protection of vulnerable groups. While, in 1990, it had finalized the draft Declaration on the protection of all persons from enforced or involuntary disappearances, its major activities in 1991 had concentrated on the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/40), on the preliminary report of Mr. Eide on constructive solutions of problems involving minorities (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/43), on the final report of Mr. Despouy on human rights and disability (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/31), and on the protection of youth and women.

61. With regard to standard-setting and effective implementation in the area of the administration of justice, the Sub-Commission had once again made substantial progress. In that connection, he mentioned the valuable ongoing work for the study of Mr. Chernichenko and Mr. Treat on the right to a fair trial (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/29), the Sub-Commission's efforts to improve the implementation of the right to habeas corpus and the principles presented by Mr. Despouy concerning the drafting of legal texts relating to states of emergency (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/28). In addition, he wished to mention the completion of Mr. Joinet's study on the independence of the judiciary, (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/30 and Add.1-4) in which a number of proposals for possible measures of assistance merited the Commission's particular attention.

62. Mr. Joinet had been very effective in his efforts as Chairman of the Sub-Commission to improve its working methods (E/CN.4/1992/46). His delegation appreciated especially the measures adopted to improve the independence of the experts serving on the Sub-Commission, particularly the possibility of secret ballots. The Working Group on reform established by the Sub-Commission had prepared a number of specific measures which had already begun to improve the efficiency of the Sub-Commission's work in accordance with the requests in Commission resolution 1991/56.

63. For years his delegation had been advocating the strengthening of structures to ensure improved coordination and cooperation between the Sub-Commission and its parent body, the Commission. In the final instance, it was, of course, for all the members of the Commission to take decisions on the

work of its subsidiary organ and to guide it to priority issues. In order to do so, however, a deeper mutual knowledge of the other organs' work seemed essential. For that exchange of information, a well-functioning coordination among the two bureaux would be particularly helpful. In that context, his delegation supported the suggestion that the Chairman of the Sub-Commission should participate in the meeting of the Commission's Bureau to take place at the end of the current session.

64. His delegation also supported the Sub-Commission's decision to set up an inter-sessional working group before its next session with a mandate to elaborate proposals for the rationalization of the work and agenda of its 1992 session. He hoped that that extraordinary Working Group would be successful in improving the structure of the agenda and the preparation and submission of working documents, studies, reports and resolutions. In addition, the role and the competence of alternate members should be clearly defined.

65. In conclusion, he emphasized that there would always be some tension between the Commission and its main subsidiary organ, composed of independent experts. While that tension might have a negative and destructive influence on the work of both organs, it could also be positive and constructive, in view of the different composition and roles of the two organs. Whether it turned out to be positive and productive depended on the attitude and responsibility of many actors on both sides of the dialogue.

66. Recent developments showed that the Commission was on the right track. One of the major preconditions for proceeding along that track was the Commission's ability and willingness to ensure that the Sub-Commission was composed of truly independent persons with considerable expertise in the broad field of human rights and a personal dedication to the values underlying human rights. His delegation hoped that the forthcoming elections of members of the Sub-Commission would be guided by those principles.

67. Mr. TABATABAEE (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that a point on which almost all members of the Commission seemed to agree, when considering agenda item 17, was the need for a change in the methods of work of the Sub-Commission. For any multilateral body to remain valid and play a constructive role commensurate with the duties entrusted to it, it must be able to respond to the ever-changing circumstances and needs of the times.

68. In its original conception, the Sub-Commission had been intended to be an organ complementary to the Commission. As things stood, it looked more like a rival. In fact, a cursory comparison between the issues and questions discussed in the Sub-Commission and in the Commission pointed to that rivalry. It might be wondered whether two similar bodies under the Economic and Social Council should be doing the same work. The logical answer was in the negative. He would like to know whether the Sub-Commission was entitled to address any and all issues pertaining to human rights or only those for which it was directly responsible in the field of minorities. The answer was, he thought, quite clear.

69. At another level, a more fundamental aspect of the Sub-Commission's work arose from the yet undefined concept of a minority. Having failed to arrive at a universally accepted definition of a minority or having simply chosen not

to engage in such a difficult exercise, the Sub-Commission had in recent years committed its limited human and financial resources to the consideration of subjects and issues of marginal utility to its mandate or even to the question of human rights in the strict sense of the word. For example, he asked how it was possible to justify the endeavour to adopt an international declaration or convention on the right to adequate housing, when the more pressing basic needs of a sizeable proportion of the world's population constituted an acute global problem.

70. In his delegation's view, attention to the following points might help the Sub-Commission to improve its methods and the contents of its work in the future. First, the Sub-Commission, although composed of independent experts, was as politicized as any international forum consisting of State representatives. Secondly, the extension of the mandate of rapporteurs should not be automatic. Thirdly, attention had already been drawn to the inordinate length of some of the Sub-Commission's studies. Fourthly, as far as the Sub-Commission's approach to situations involving discrimination against minorities was concerned, it should not act as a court of law, but direct its efforts towards a solution of the problem. Fifthly, the question of the rights of indigenous peoples and the elaboration of ways and means to protect those rights constituted one of the main legitimate areas of the Sub-Commission's work.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.